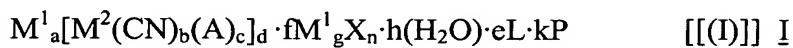


Docket No.: 268259US0PCT
Preliminary Amendment

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for the preparation of at least one alkoxylate comprising the bringing into contact of an alkylene oxide mixture at least comprising ethylene oxide with at least one starter compound in the presence of at least one double-metal cyanide compound of the formula I:



in which wherein

[-] M^1 is at least one a metal ion chosen selected from the group consisting of Zn^{2+} , Fe^{3+} , Co^{3+} , Ni^{2+} , Mn^{2+} , Co^{2+} , Sn^{2+} , Pb^{2+} , Mo^{4+} , Mo^{6+} , Al^{3+} , V^{4+} , V^{5+} , Sr^{2+} , W^{4+} , W^{6+} , Cr^{2+} , Cr^{3+} , Cd^{2+} , Hg^{2+} , Pd^{2+} , Pt^{2+} , V^{2+} , Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , Ba^{2+} , Cu^{2+} , La^{3+} , Ce^{3+} , Ce^{4+} , Eu^{3+} , Ti^{3+} , Ti^{4+} , Ag^+ , Rh^{2+} , Rh^{3+} , Ru^{2+} , and Ru^{3+} [[,]] :

[-] M^2 is at least one a metal ion chosen selected from the group consisting of Fe^{2+} , Fe^{3+} , Co^{2+} , Co^{3+} , Mn^{2+} , Mn^{3+} , V^{4+} , V^{5+} , Cr^{2+} , Cr^{3+} , Rh^{3+} , Ru^{2+} , and Ir^{3+} [[,]] :

[-] A and X, independently of one another, are an anions, each of which is chosen selected from the group consisting of halide, hydroxide, sulfate, carbonate, cyanide, thiocyanate, isocyanate, cyanate, carboxylate, oxalate, nitrate, nitrosyl, hydrogensulfate, phosphate, dihydrogenphosphate, hydrogenphosphate or and hydrogencarbonate[[,]] :

[-] L is a water-miscible ligand chosen selected from the group consisting of alcohols, aldehydes, ketones, ethers, polyethers, esters, polyesters, polycarbonate, ureas, amides, primary, secondary and tertiary amines, ligands with pyridine nitrogen, nitriles, sulfides, phosphides, phosphates, phosphines, phosphonates and phosphates[[,]] :

[[[-]]] k is a fraction or an integer, wherein the value of k is greater than or equal to zero[[,]] ; and

[[[-]]] P is an organic additive[[,]] ;

[[[-]]] a, b, c, d, g and n are chosen such that the electroneutrality of the compound

[[(I)]] I is ensured, where e may be 0;

[[[-]]] e is the number of ligand molecules, wherein e is a fraction or an integer, and wherein the value of e is greater than or equal to 0 [[, or 0,]] ; and

[[[-]]] each of f and h, independently of one another, are is a fraction or an integer wherein each of f and h, independently of each other, has a value greater than or equal to 0 [[, or 0,]] ;

wherein, during the induction phase, the sum of the inert gas partial pressure and the ethylene oxide partial pressure is 1.5 bar to 6.0 bar and ; and wherein the starter compound is a Guerbet alcohol.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in of claim 1, wherein the total pressure does not exceed 11 bar over the course of the reaction.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in of claim 1 or 2, wherein at least one of the following properties is satisfied:

(1) M¹ is chosen selected from the group consisting of Zn²⁺, Fe²⁺, Fe³⁺, Co³⁺, Ni²⁺, Mn²⁺ and Co²⁺; or

(2) M² is chosen selected from the group consisting of Fe²⁺, Fe³⁺, and Co³⁺.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in of claims 1 to 3 claim 1, wherein M¹ is Zn²⁺ and M² is Co³⁺.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in of claims 1 to 4 claim 1, wherein the double-metal cyanide compound used as catalyst is crystalline.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A The process as claimed in of claims 1 to 5 claim 1, wherein the alkylene oxide mixture has an ethylene oxide fraction of more than 99%.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): An alkoxylate obtainable obtained by a the process according to any of the claims 1 to 6 of claim 1.

Claim 8 (New): The process of claim 1, wherein c has a value of 0.

Claim 9 (New): The process of claim 1, wherein

- (1) M¹ is selected from the group consisting of Zn²⁺, Fe²⁺, Fe³⁺, Co³⁺, Ni²⁺, Mn²⁺ and Co²⁺; and
- (2) M² is selected from the group consisting of Fe²⁺, Fe³⁺, and Co³⁺.